[Translation]

Telephone Service in Firozabad

2969. PROF. OMPAL SINGH NIDAR : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Department of Telephone have divided Firozabad district into two parts;

(b) whether the Government propose to open D.M.T. office in Firozabad district of Uttar Pradesh;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Not applicable in view of (b) above.

(d) Firozabad is a part of Agra/Mainpuri Secondary Switching Areas (SSAs). There is already an office of GMT at Agra and that of TDE at Mainpuri. There is thus no justification for an independent D.M.T. office at Firozabad.

Mining of Sand to Fishermen in Uttar Pradesh

2970. SHRI GANGA CHARAN RAJPUT : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) the norms fixed for mining of sand in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) whether the Government propose to allot the mining work of sand and redsand to fishermen community;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the number of times lease of sand being given to this community in the State during the last three years;

(e) whether the Government have received complaints in regard to allotment of work of mining lease;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the steps taken against guilty officials?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) to (g). The grant of quarry lease, mining lease and other mineral concessions in respect of Minor minerals like ordinary sand and building stones are regulated in accordance with the provisions of Minor Mineral Concession Rules framed by the State Governments. It is only in respect of the minerals specified in the First Schedule of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 that no prospecting licence/ mining lease can be granted except with the prior approval of the Central Government. As sand is not listed in First Schedule of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957, prior approval of the Central Government is not required to be obtained and hence the Central Government does not monitor pendency for grant of mineral concession for Minor minerals.

Gauge Conversion

2971. SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any scheme for the conversion of Jabalpur-Bhanda-Nainpur via Gondia meter gauge railway line into broad gauge; and

(b) if so, the time by which the conversion work is likely to be started and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The work is included in the first phase of Action Plan and would be taken up in the coming years.

Steel Industry

2972. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ :

JUSTIC GUMAN MAL LODHA :

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned, 'Steel Industry to stage recovery in second half' appearing in the Economic Times deted October 2, 1996;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that although the domestic consumption level of steel is low while the prices of steel have marked an increase during the first six months of 1996-97;

(c) if so, whether due t price-rise imported steel has become cheaper as compared to the domestically produced steel;

(d) if not, the factual position in this regard;

(e) whether it is also a fact that Steel Industry has lodged a complaint to the Government that foreigners are dumping steel in the country; and

(f) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) Yes. Sir.

(b) The apparent consumption of finished steel for the first six months of 1996-97 has been 10.375 million tonnes, registering an increase of about 9.3% as compared to the corresponding period previous year.